7 From Bach

1–2 **Selections from *The Well-Tempered Clavier* (arr. string quartet)**
JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH (1685–1750)**/WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART** (1756–1791)

Fugue in E-flat Major, BWV 876 (String Quartet no. 7, K. 405) 1:50
Fugue in d minor, BWV 877 (String Quartet no. 8, K. 405) 2:35

3–6 **String Quartet in d minor, op. 76, no. 2, *Quinten*** (1796)
JOSEPH HAYDN (1732–1809)

Allegro 6:52
Andante o più tosto allegretto 5:19
Minuetto: Allegro ma non troppo 3:05
Finale: Vivace assai 4:08

7–11 **String Quartet no. 15 in a minor, op. 132** (1824–1825)
LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN (1770–1827)

Assai sostenuto – Allegro 9:56
Allegro ma non tanto 9:23
Molto adagio (Heiliger Dankgesang eines Genesenen an die Gottheit, in der lydischen Ton) 18:41
Alla marcia, assai vivace 2:14
Allegro appassionato 6:51

DANISH STRING QUARTET:
FREDERIK ØLAND, RUNE TONSGAARD SØRENSEN, *violins;* ASBJØRN NØRGAARD, *viola;* FREDRIK SCHØYEN SJÖLIN, *cello*

Recorded July 21, 2013, The Center for Performing Arts at Menlo-Atherton. Recording producer and engineer: Da-Hong Seetoo. Steinway grand pianos provided courtesy of ProPiano. Cover art: *Imprint,* 2006, by Sebastian Spreng. Photos by Tristan Cook, Diana Lake, and Brian Benton. Liner notes by Patrick Castillo and Andrew Goldstein. Booklet design by Nick Stone. CD production: Jerome Bunke, Digital Force, New York. Production Assistant: Andrew Goldstein. Music@Menlo 2013 was made possible in part by a leadership grant from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation with additional support from the David and Lucile Packard Foundation and Koret Foundation Funds. American Public Media was the official radio and new-media broadcast partner of Music@Menlo 2013.

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Music@Menlo LIVE

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HAYDN	String Quartet in d minor, op. 76, no. 2
BEETHOVEN	String Quartet in a minor, op. 132

Music@Menlo *LIVE*

7 From Bach

Music@Menlo's eleventh season, *From Bach,* celebrated the timeless work of Johann Sebastian Bach, the composer whose profound legacy has shaped Western music over the two and a half centuries since his death. Each disc of the 2013 edition of Music@Menlo *LIVE* captures the spirit of the season.

The string quartet medium, the spinal column of the chamber music literature, did not exist in Bach's lifetime. Yet even here, Bach's legacy is inescapable. The fugues of his seminal *The Well-Tempered Clavier* inspired no less a genius than Mozart, who arranged them for string quartet. Bach's architectural mastery permeates the ingenious *Quinten* Quartet of Joseph Haydn, the father of the modern string quartet. Disc VII concludes with Beethoven's Opus 132 Quartet, recalling another Bachian signature: the Baroque master's sacred chorales.

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH (1685–1750)**/**
WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART (1756–1791)
Fugue in E-flat Major, BWV 876, and Fugue in d minor, BWV 877, from *Das wohltemperierte Klavier;* arr. String Quartets nos. 7 and 8, K. 405
(ca. 1740, arr. 1782)
In the early 1780s, Mozart was a frequent visitor to the home of the Baron Gottfried van Swieten, an imperial official at the Viennese court as well as a great music lover and amateur composer. Van Swieten hosted Sunday salons, at which Mozart would

Ludwig van Beethoven's String Quartet no. 15 in a minor, op. 132. The Danish String Quartet.

play and study the fugues of Bach and Handel. By exploring these works, Mozart steadily developed his own facility at composing fugues, a musical form prevalent during the Baroque period in which multiple voices enter in turn, playing the same musical idea (called a subject), creating a polyphonic conversation. Mozart's arrangements of five fugues from Bach's *The Well-Tempered Clavier,* K. 405, are one of several experiments with this form. Other examples include another set of Bach fugue arrangements, K. 404a, and the Fugue in c minor for Two Pianos, K. 426, later rearranged for string quartet as the Adagio and Fugue, K. 546. (This is not to mention the untold number of improvised fugues played for the entertainment of audiences ranging from his wife to Emperor Joseph II. Some of these have been lost, but more were lamentably

never written down.) In any event, Mozart's fascination with fugal writing—and with the fugues of Bach in particular—formed an integral part of the development of his craft. Biographer Julian Rushton writes, "Perhaps no composer since the young Purcell had so fructified his own style by earnest wrestling with the practices of a bygone era."

—Patrick Castillo

JOSEPH HAYDN (1732–1809)
String Quartet in d minor, op. 76, no. 2, *Quinten* (1796)

In the 1791–1792 and 1794–1795 concert seasons, Haydn traveled to London at the invitation of the prominent impresario Johann Peter Salomon. Having spent much of his compositional life in Esterháza, located nearly twenty-five miles southeast of Eisenstadt, Haydn found the bustling and vibrant culture of London both bewildering and artistically rejuvenating. By the time Haydn returned to Vienna in 1795, his fame brought him international recognition as the world's foremost composer. It was at this time that Haydn wrote some of his most ingenious string works, including the Opus 76 set of six quartets in 1796, commissioned by Count Joseph Erdödy. The second work of this collection, the Quartet in d minor, op. 76, no. 2, has become known as *Die Quinten,* or *Fifths*. The nickname derives from the motif of two descending fifths that opens the work and permeates much of the first movement *Allegro.* (Scholars often note that this motive, used episodically throughout the movement, evokes London's Big Ben tower, which chimes the same four notes at the third quarter of every hour.) After launching the first theme, this motif serves as the basis of the entire exposition, spinning a series of melodic ideas, all closely related to the *Quinten* motif. Rather than introducing a second theme, Haydn deceptively broaches the *Quinten* motif again, modulating from d minor to the relative F major. In contrast to the intensity of the *Allegro,* the slow movement offers a charming interlude before the *minuetto,* whose mildly demonic character has earned it the subtitle *Hexen-Menuett,* or "Witches' Minuet." The movement is structured in ternary form, beginning with a canon. The unison

two-voice melody in the violins is perfectly echoed by the viola and cello (set an octave lower), creating a sort of musical doppelgänger. The light and energetic trio section that follows gives lead to a captivating reprise of the canon. The rhythmically vibrant *Vivace assai* begins with a constrained theme in d minor. The movement steadily gains momentum, modulating to the bright key of D major for a joyous finale.

—Andrew Goldstein

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN (1770–1827)
String Quartet no. 15 in a minor, op. 132 (1824–1825)

Near the end of his life, after completing his last symphony and his last piano sonata, Ludwig van Beethoven turned once again, after a twelve-year hiatus, to the string quartet medium, the pinnacle of the composer's mighty creative powers and infinite imagination. In the five late quartets (opp. 127, 130, 131, 132, and 135), Beethoven surpassed all precedent for the expressive capabilities of music, as if transcending this world and composing for listeners of future generations. The impetus for the late quartets was a commission from the Russian prince Nikolay Golitsïn, himself an amateur cellist. Golitsïn asked Beethoven for "one, two, or three quartets, for which labor I will be glad to pay you what you think proper." Beethoven began the String Quartet in a minor, op. 132, in the winter of 1824 and completed it the following July. The Schuppanzigh Quartet gave Opus 132 its unofficial premiere on September 9, 1825, at a Viennese tavern for an audience of fourteen; the public premiere took place two months later, on November 6. The first movement has a free-spirited quality. Though the movement essentially follows sonata form, the emergence of each new musical idea carries the feeling of the next logical thought, rather than something formulaically conceived for the sake of thematic contrast. Following the mercurial opening measures, a brief melodic phrase, marked by three repeated notes, comes to the surface and passes through all four instruments. This blossoms effortlessly into a flowing theme in the second violin. Beethoven proceeds in this fashion throughout the

movement, expanding on the basic material presented at the outset of the work and exploiting it to craft a very rich movement indeed, whose psychological and emotional complexity cannot be simply or decisively articulated. A lighter, lyrical second movement follows, as a preface to the quartet's emotional centerpiece. The quartet is in five movements, though studies of Beethoven's sketchbooks suggest that he originally planned a more traditional four-movement structure. But his work on the quartet was interrupted for one month by a severe intestinal illness; upon recovery, Beethoven added the quartet's substantial third movement, which would come to be regarded as the heart of the work. Beethoven inscribed above the movement "*Heiliger Dankgesang eines Genesenen an die Gottheit, in der lydischen Ton*"—"Holy Song of Thanksgiving to the Divinity by a Convalescent, in the Lydian Mode." (The Lydian mode, an ancient church mode marked by the raised fourth, adds to the *Heiliger Dankgesang*'s prayerful aura.) The movement begins with a solemn chorale melody. The *Heiliger Dankgesang* alternates between varied restatements of this Bach-like chorale and more animated passages, marked "*Neue Kraft fühlend*"—"feeling of new strength." The movement ends with a final utterance of the *Heiliger Dankgesang,* which Beethoven marks to be played "with the most intimate emotions." Following the great spiritual magnitude of the *Heiliger Dankgesang,* Beethoven gives the listener a welcome respite with a good-humored march movement—understandable, perhaps, as an extension of the previous movement's celebration of newfound vigor. But lest the listener hear this brief march simply as a palate cleanser after the *Heiliger Dankgesang,* Beethoven rounds it off in striking fashion: above dramatic tremolando in the lower strings, the first violin issues a declamatory recitative. The recitative proceeds *attacca* to the spirited sonata-rondo finale, marked *Allegro appassionato.*

—Patrick Castillo

About Music@Menlo

Music@Menlo is an internationally acclaimed three-week summer festival and institute that combines world-class chamber music performances, extensive audience engagement with artists, intensive training for preprofessional musicians, and efforts to enhance and broaden the chamber music community of the San Francisco Bay Area. An immersive and engaging experience centered around a distinctive array of programming, Music@Menlo enriches its core concert programs with numerous opportunities for in-depth learning to intensify audiences' enjoyment and understanding of the music and provide meaningful ways for aficionados and newcomers of all ages to explore classical chamber music.